



# BICYCLE FRIENDLY COMMUNITY FEEDBACK REPORT

Columbia, MO

Fall 2013



The League of American Bicyclists has designated **Columbia** as a Bicycle Friendly Community at the **Silver** level, because Columbia exhibits a strong commitment to cycling. The reviewers felt that notable steps are being taken to address the needs of current bicyclists and to encourage other residents to become regular cyclists as well.

Reviewers were very pleased to see the current efforts and dedication to make Columbia a great place for cyclists.

Below, reviewers provided key recommendations to further promote bicycling in Columbia and a menu of additional pro-cycling measures that can be implemented in the short and long term. We strongly encourage you to use this feedback to build on your momentum and improve your community for bicyclists. There may also be initiatives, programs, and facilities that are not mentioned here that would benefit your bicycling culture, so please continue to try new things to increase your ridership, safety, and awareness! Here is a comparison showing Columbia next to the average Silver and Gold level communities in the categories that still need improvement:

- **Percentage of bike commuters:** Columbia: 1.97% (Average Silver: 3.5% ) Average Gold: 5.5%
- **Percentage of arterial streets with bike lanes:** Columbia: 65% (Average Silver: 45%) Average Gold: 65%
- **Bike facility network mileage to total road network mileage:** Columbia: 20% (Average Silver: 30%) Average Gold: 45%

- **Percentage of primary and secondary schools with biking education:** Columbia: 30% (Average Silver: 43%) Average Gold: 50%

To learn more about what funds are available for bicycle projects, use Advocacy Advance's interactive [Find it, Fund it tool](#) to search for eligible **funding** programs by bike/ped project type or review the same information as a PDF [here](#).

**The key measures Columbia should take to improve cycling:**

- Continue to expand the bike network and to increase network connectivity through the use of different types of [bike lanes](#), [cycle tracks](#) and [shared lane markings](#). On-street improvements coupled with the expansion of the off-street system [will encourage more people to cycle](#) and will improve safety. Ensure smooth transitions for bicyclists between the trail network and the street network. These improvements will also increase the effectiveness of encouragement efforts by providing a broader range of facility choices for users of various abilities and comfort levels.
- Continue to offer Cycling Skills classes, Traffic Skills 101 classes and bike commuter classes more frequently or encourage a local bicycle advocacy group or shop to do so. Ideally, the instruction should incorporate a classroom portion as well as on-road training. The classroom portion of Traffic Skills 101 is now available [online](#) as well. For more information visit: [www.bikeleague.org/programs/education/](http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/education/)

- Since arterial and collector roads are the backbone of every transportation network, it is essential to provide designated bicycle facilities along these roads and calm traffic speeds to allow bicyclists of all skill levels to reach their destinations quickly and safely. On roads with posted speed limits of more than 35 mph, it is recommended to provide protected bicycle infrastructure, such as [cycle tracks](#), [buffered bike lanes](#) or parallel 10ft wide shared-use paths.
- Develop a system of bicycle boulevards, utilizing quiet neighborhood streets, that creates an attractive, convenient, and comfortable cycling environment welcoming to cyclists of all ages and skill levels. Learn how to do it at <http://www.ibpi.usp.pdx.edu/guidebook.php>. Use the [Bicycle Boulevards section](#) of the NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide for design guidelines.
- Make intersections safer and more comfortable for cyclists. Include elements such as color, signage, medians, signal detection, and pavement markings. The level of treatment required for bicyclists at an intersection will depend on the bicycle facility type used, whether bicycle facilities are intersecting, the adjacent street function and land use. See the [NACTO design guidelines](#) and the 2012 [AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities](#) for recommended intersection treatments.

## Benefits of Further Improving Columbia for Cycling

Further increasing bicycle use can **improve the environment** by reducing the impact on residents of pollution and noise, limiting greenhouse gases, and improving the quality of public spaces; **Reduce congestion** by shifting short trips (the majority of trips in cities) out of cars. This will also make cities more accessible for public transport, walking, essential car travel, emergency services, and deliveries; **Save lives** by creating safer conditions for bicyclists and as a direct consequence improve the safety of all other road users. **Research shows** that increasing the number of bicyclists on the street improves bicycle safety; **Increase opportunities** for residents of all ages to participate socially and economically in the community, regardless of income or ability.

Greater choice of travel modes also increases independence, especially among **seniors** and **children**; **Boost the economy** by creating a community that is an attractive destination for new residents, tourists and businesses; **Enhance recreational opportunities**, especially for children, and further contribute to the quality of life in the community; **Save city funds** by increasing the efficient use of public space, reducing the need for costly new road infrastructure, preventing crashes, improving the health of the community, and increasing the use of public transport; **Enhance public safety and security** by increasing the number of “eyes on the street” and providing more options for movement in the event of emergencies, natural disasters, and major public events; **Improve the health and well being** of the population by promoting routine physical activity.

- Continue to expand your public education campaign promoting the share the road message. Take advantage of your local bicycle groups for content development and manpower. See the excellent “[Look](#)” campaign in New York City, the “[Don’t be a Road Hog](#)” campaign in Colorado and this great, downloadable PSA released by the AAA and the League: It Moves Us All <http://vimeo.com/60585187>
- Expand the Safe Routes to School or equivalent program that emphasize bicycling for all elementary schools, middle schools and high schools. For more information, see [the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Safe Routes To School Toolkit](http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/saferoutes/index.php), [www.bikeleague.org/programs/saferoutes/index.php](http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/saferoutes/index.php) or visit [www.saferoutesinfo.org](http://www.saferoutesinfo.org).
- Consider launching an expanded bike share system. Bike sharing is a convenient, cost effective, and healthy way of encouraging locals and visitors to make short trips by bike and to bridge the “last mile” between public transit and destinations. See what is being done across the country at <http://nacto.org/bikeshare/>

## Menu of additional recommendations to further promote bicycling:

### Engineering

Low hanging fruit and fast results

- Develop and implement streetscape design guidelines that foster a pleasant and comfortable environment for

pedestrians and cyclists. Beautiful streetscaping has also shown to increase community livability and pride, reduce crime and increase property values.

- Offer [ongoing training](#) opportunities on accommodating bicyclists for engineering and planning staff.
- Consider passing an ordinance or policy that would require larger employers to provide shower facilities and other end-of-trip amenities.
- Ensure that the standards for bike parking conform to [APBP guidelines](#).
- Continue to increase the amount of [high quality bicycle parking](#) at popular destinations such as major transit stops, schools, universities, recreational and entertainment facilities, retail stores, office buildings, and churches throughout the community. Residents of multi-family dwellings and public housing should have access to high quality bike parking as well. Regulations that require bike parking for existing buildings should be implemented. See the bicycle parking ordinances of [Madison, Wisconsin](#) and [Santa Cruz, California](#).
- Implement [road diets](#) in appropriate locations to make streets more efficient and safe. Use the newly created space for bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

- Promote active transportation by reducing traffic speeds. Consider lowering the speed limit to 20 mph or lower on non-arterial roads, especially in denser areas, around schools and shopping centers, and in neighborhoods. Use traffic calming measures and low speed design principles to achieve higher compliance rates. Speed [has been identified](#) as a key risk factor in road traffic injuries, influencing both the risk of a road traffic crash as well as the severity of the injuries that result from crashes. For instance, pedestrians and cyclists have a 90% chance of survival if hit by a car travelling at a speed of 20 mph or below, but less than a 50% chance of surviving an impact of 30 mph or above. [Studies](#) also generally report a positive association between traffic safety (perceived and/or measured) and walking and cycling, particularly among women.
- Expand the [bicycle wayfinding system](#) at strategic locations around the community.
- Implement broader transportation policies and programs that encourage alternative transportation choices, such as maximum/no minimum car parking standards to complement your community's infrastructure investments and programs.

#### Long Term Goals

- Implement land use policies that minimize large lot/low density development to better facilitate bicycling, pedestrian and transit trips. Require a mix of uses throughout the community to further shorten the distances people need to bike. Consider a form-based

code to allow for flexible land uses and to provide a comfortable and convenient built environment for pedestrians and cyclists.

- Develop solutions to physical barriers in order to provide convenient bicycle access to all parts of the community. (e.g. Improving bicycling access across major roads and intersections)
- Improve the [connectivity of your street network](#). Both increased intersection density and additional street connectivity are associated with more walking, biking, and transit use due to greater directness of travel and more route choice options.

#### Education

##### Low hanging fruit and fast results

- Host a League Cycling Instructor (LCI) seminar to increase the number of certified LCIs in your community. Having local instructors will enable your community to expand cycling education, recruit knowledgeable cycling ambassadors, deliver education to motorists, provide cycling education to adults and kids, and have experts available to assist in encouragement programs. Visit <http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/education/> for more information.

- Consider creating a [Bicycle Ambassador](#) program. Have Ambassadors attend community and private events year-round to talk to residents and visitors of all ages about bicycling and to give bicycle safety demonstrations. They can also offer bike commuting presentations for area businesses.

#### Long Term Goals

- Start a bicyclist and motorist ticket diversion program. Road users given a citation are offered an opportunity to waive fees for violations by attending a bicycling education course. This course should include a classroom and on-road component. See what [Pima County](#) and [San Diego County](#) have done.
- Start a Share the Road motorist education program for professional drivers. See San Francisco's [Frequent Driver Education](#).
- Continue to increase your efforts to ensure your bicycle education programs reach traditionally underserved populations, particularly seniors, women, minorities, non-English speakers and the disabled.

#### Encouragement

##### Low hanging fruit and fast results

- Continue to expand the reach of encouragement efforts during Bike Month in partnership with local bicycle advocacy groups. Keep hosting, sponsoring and encouraging bicycle-themed community events, campaigns and programs. Increase your efforts on Bike

to Work Day and Bike to School Day. Ensure to widely advertise all bicycle-themed community events and programs. For ideas and more information, visit <http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/bikemonth/>.

- Continue to host, sponsor and/or encourage a variety of social and family-friendly bicycle-themed community events year-round, such as a bike movie festival, a 4<sup>th</sup> of July bike parade, an “increase-your-appetite” Thanksgiving community ride, a dress-like-Santa community ride before Christmas, a bicycle fashion show (stylish alternatives to spandex), a Halloween bike decoration competition, a bike to the arts event, etc. Work closely with local bicycle groups, bike shops and schools. Provide appropriate safety measures such as road closures or police escorts.
- Encourage local public agencies, businesses and organizations to promote cycling to the workplace and to seek recognition through the free [Bicycle Friendly Business program](#). Businesses will profit from a [healthier, happier and more productive workforce](#) while the community would profit from less congestion, better air quality, public bike parking in prime locations provided by businesses, new and powerful partners in advocating for bike infrastructure and programs on the local, state and federal level, and business-sponsored public bike events or classes. Your community's government should be the model employer for the rest of the community. See what the Colorado-based New Belgium Brewing Company is doing [here](#).

- Encourage local institutions of higher education to promote cycling and to seek recognition through the [Bicycle Friendly University program](#). Many colleges and universities have embraced the growing enthusiasm for more bicycle-friendly campuses by incorporating bike share programs, bike co-ops, bicycling education classes and policies to promote bicycling as a preferred means of transportation. The community could potentially profit as well: Communities near a BFU such as Stanford or University of California at Davis have a very high number of regular bicyclists (as many students bike to campus, shops and restaurants), less congestion around campus, safer streets and university-hosted public bicycle events, programs and classes.
- Consider offering a 'Ciclovía' or 'Open Streets' type event, closing off a major corridor to auto traffic and offering the space to cyclists, pedestrians and group exercise events. Check out LA's [CicLAvia](#)! And more on Open Streets: <http://openstreetsproject.org/>
- Work with local non-profits to establish a youth recreation or intervention program centered on bicycling, such as an [Earn a Bike program](#). See what the Community Cycling Center in Portland, OR does: <http://www.communitycyclingcenter.org/>

#### Long Term Goals

- Develop a series of short (2-5 mi.) (themed) loop routes around the community and provide appropriate way-finding signage. Integrate these routes into local bike

maps. See what Arlington, VA has done at <http://www.bikearlington.com/tasks/sites/bike/assets/File/Arlington-Loop.jpg>

#### Enforcement

##### Low hanging fruit and fast results

- Ask police officers to use targeted information and enforcement to encourage motorists and cyclists to share the road safely. This could be in the form of a brochure or tip card explaining each user's rights and responsibilities. Have information material available in Spanish, if applicable.
- Enforcement practices could also include positive enforcement ticketing. Police officers could team up with local stores to reward safe cycling practices by handing out gift certificates to cyclists who are "caught" following the law.
- Ensure that police officers report cyclist crash data and potential hazards to the public works department, traffic engineers and transportation planners to timely identify sites in need of safety improvements for cyclists.
- Pass more laws that protect cyclists, e.g. implement specific penalties for motorists for failing to yield to a cyclist when turning, make it illegal to park or drive in a bike lane (intersections excepted), implement penalties for motor vehicle users that 'door' cyclists, specifically protect all vulnerable road users, and formalize a legal passing distance of at least 3 feet,.



## Evaluation/Planning

### Low hanging fruit and fast results

- Continue to actively involve the local bicycle community in community planning efforts, policy development and public outreach.
- Adopt a target level of bicycle use (e.g. percent of trips) to be achieved within a specific timeframe, and ensure data collection necessary to monitor progress.
- Expand efforts to evaluate bicycle crash statistics and produce a specific plan to reduce the number of crashes in the community. Available tools include [\*Intersection Magic\*](#) and the [\*Pedestrian and Bicyclist Crash Analysis Tool\*](#). See the report [\*Bicyclist Fatalities and Serious Injuries in New York City 1996-2005\*](#)
- Consider measuring the Bicycle Level of Service (BLOS) on community roads and at intersections, to be able to identify the most appropriate routes for inclusion in the community bicycle network, determine weak links and hazards, prioritize sites needing improvement, and evaluate alternate treatments for improving bike-friendliness of a roadway or intersection: <http://www.bikelib.org/bike-planning/bicycle-level-of-service/> (roads) and <http://www.bicyclinginfo.org/library/details.cfm?id=4425> (intersections).

- Implement a community-wide trip reduction program or ordinance. See good examples [here](#).
- Consider individualized marketing to identify and support current and potential bike commuters in your community. See what Bellingham, WA is doing: [www.whatcomsmarttrips.org](http://www.whatcomsmarttrips.org)
- Establish a mechanism that ensures that bicycle facilities and programs are implemented in traditionally underserved neighborhoods.

### Long Term Goals

- Develop an updated [comprehensive bike plan](#) that sets a high but attainable target for use in close collaboration with the community to ensure public involvement, information and ownership. Consider using a tool like a Bicycle Account to track progress. See the League's Bicycle Account Guidelines for more information: [http://bikeleague.org/sites/lab.huang.radicaldesigns.org/files/Bicycle\\_Account\\_Guidelines.pdf](http://bikeleague.org/sites/lab.huang.radicaldesigns.org/files/Bicycle_Account_Guidelines.pdf)

**For more ideas and best practices please visit the [Bicycle Friendly Community Resource Page](#).**